

DEFIANT

1

\$3.25

\$4.25 CANADA

**SPECIAL
48-PAGE
ISSUE!**

CHARLEMAGNE



nemogriffen
@
www.zcultfn.com



OCTOBER 12, 1973.
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY...

THE STATE MOTTO READS,
"UNITED WE STAND,
DIVIDED WE FALL."

THAT'S A PROVERB 12-YEAR-OLD
CHARLES SMITH HAS KEPT IN HIS
HEART FROM THE MOMENT HIS
BROTHER LEFT FOR VIETNAM...

...AND WAS REPORTED
MISSING-IN-ACTION.

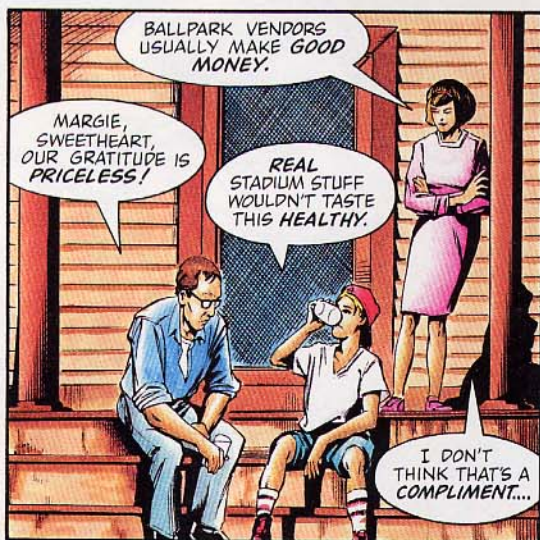
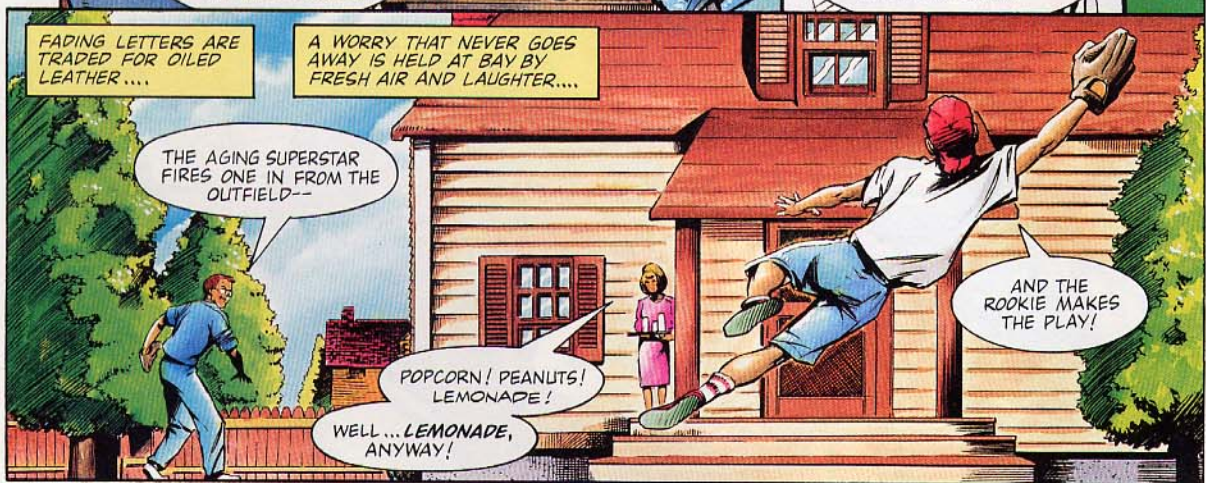
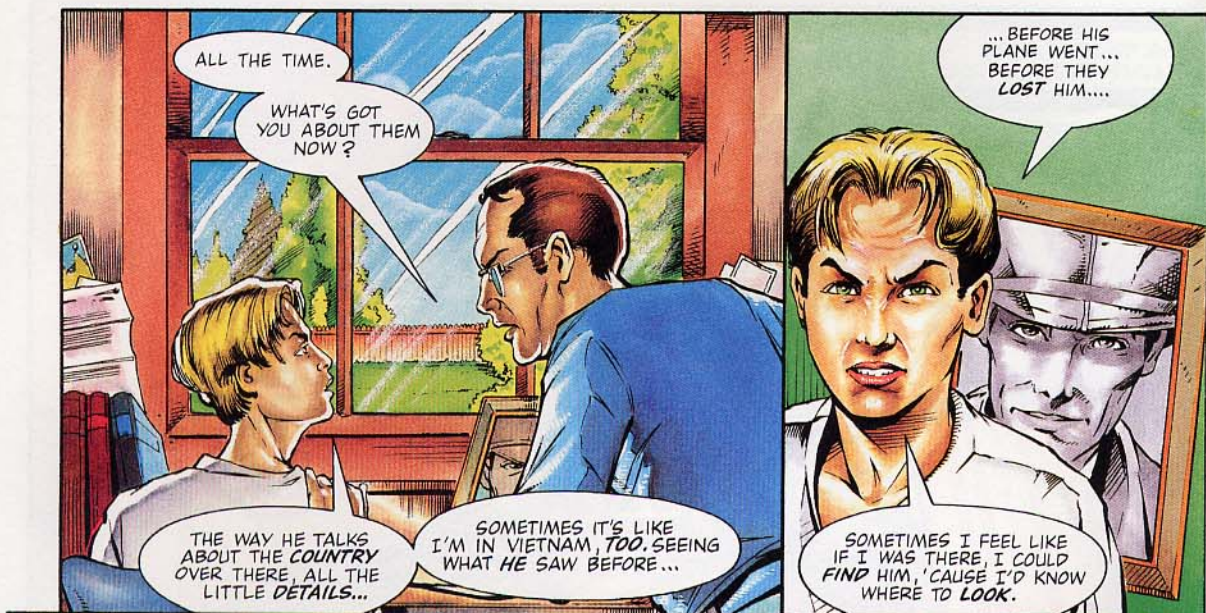
IT'S OKAY TO MISS
YOUR BROTHER, CHARLIE...
BUT PETE WOULDN'T WANT
YOU MISSING OUT ON A
DAY LIKE TODAY!

WHATTA YOU
SAY? GET OUT
THERE WITH THE
OLD MAN, THROW
ONE AROUND?

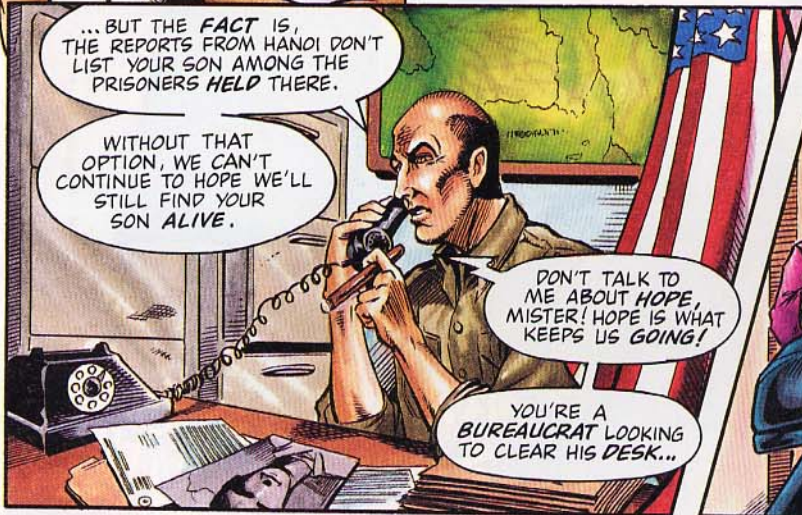
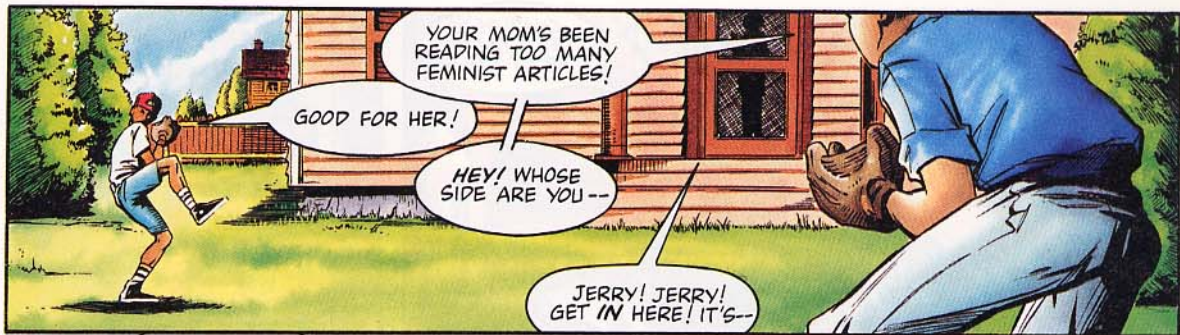
D'YA EVER
READ HIS LETTERS,
DAD?

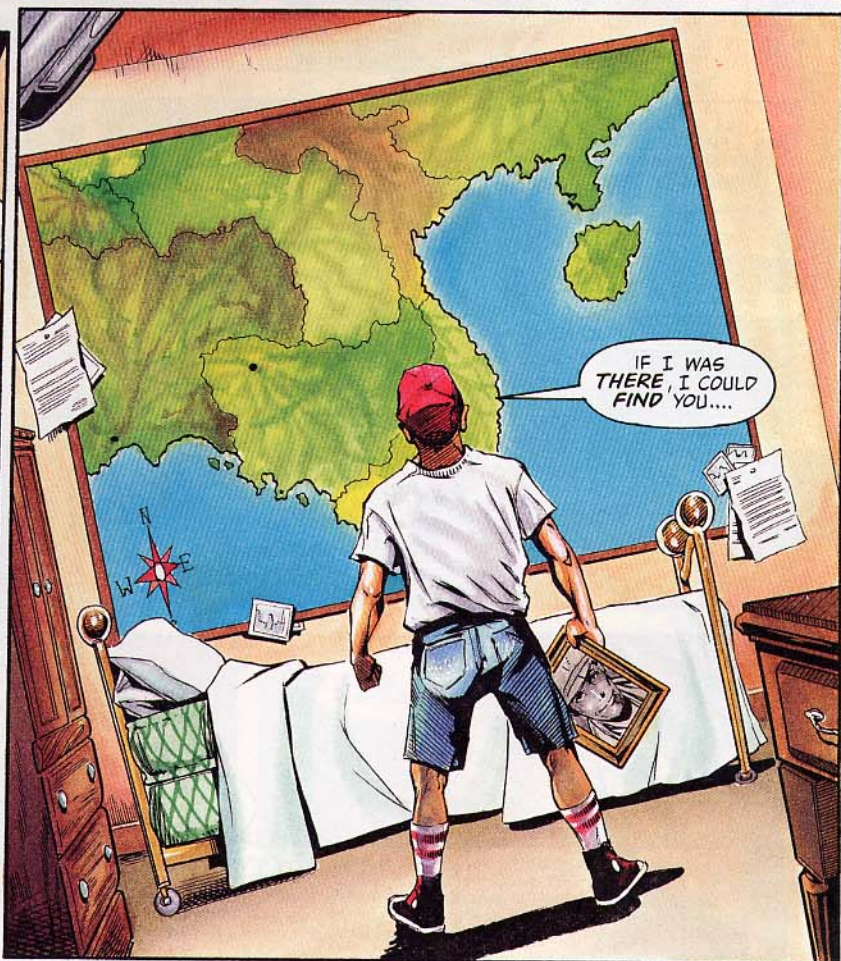
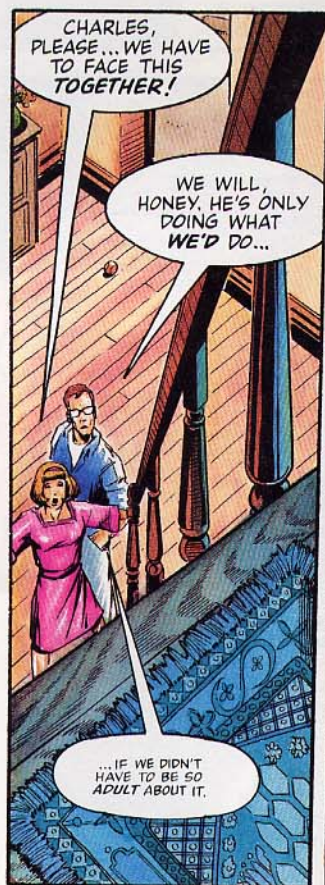
PLOTTED BY JIM SHOOTER,
PHILIP NUTMAN, ADAM ROLLINA,
DEBORAH PURCELL, AND
D.G. CHICHESTER
WRITTEN BY D.G. CHICHESTER
PENCILED BY ADAM ROLLINA
INKED BY MIKE WITHERBY
PAINTED BY OCLAIR
LETTERED BY MINDY EISMAN
EDITED BY DEBORAH PURCELL
CREATED BY JIM SHOOTER
AND DEBORAH PURCELL
DEVELOPED BY JIM SHOOTER,
DEBORAH PURCELL, AND
ADAM ROLLINA

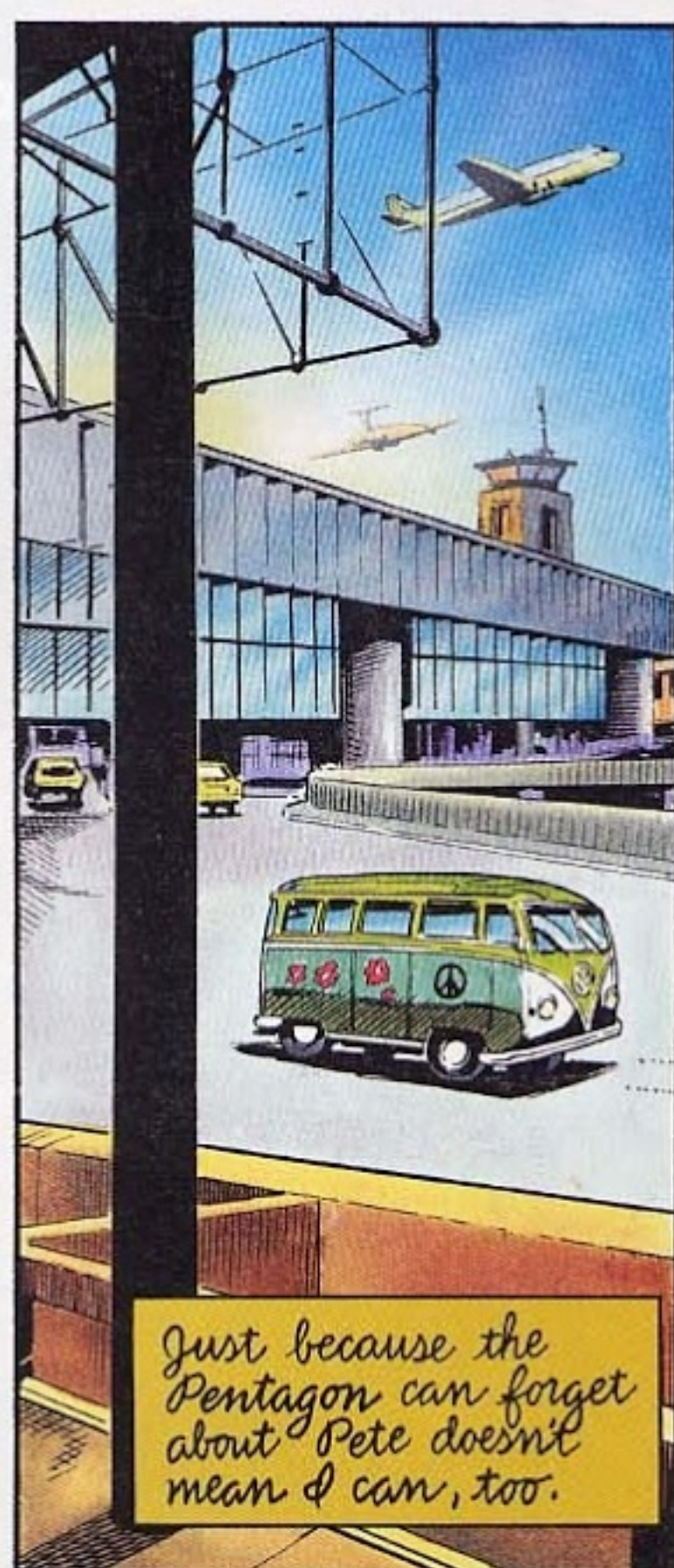
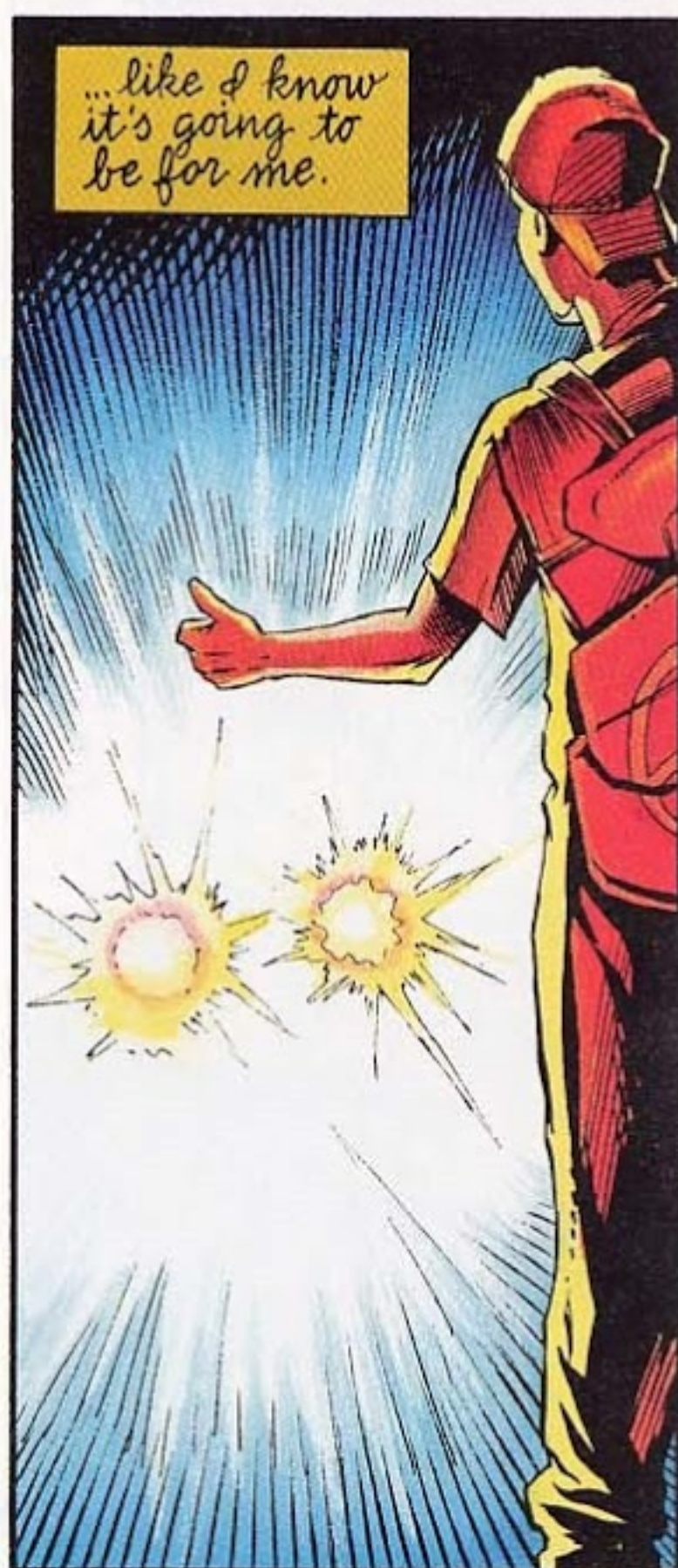
FIRE WILL COME...

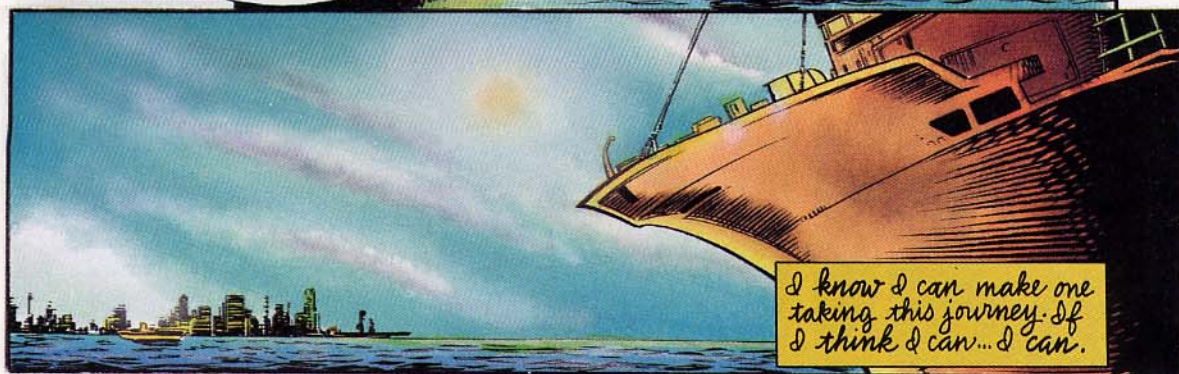


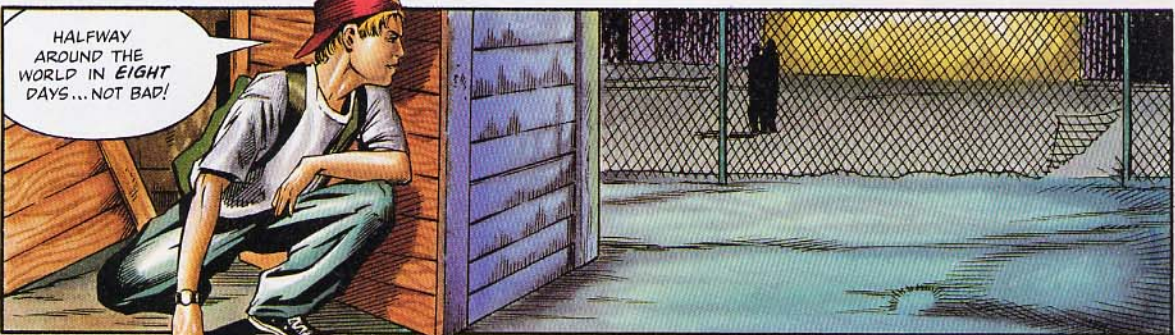
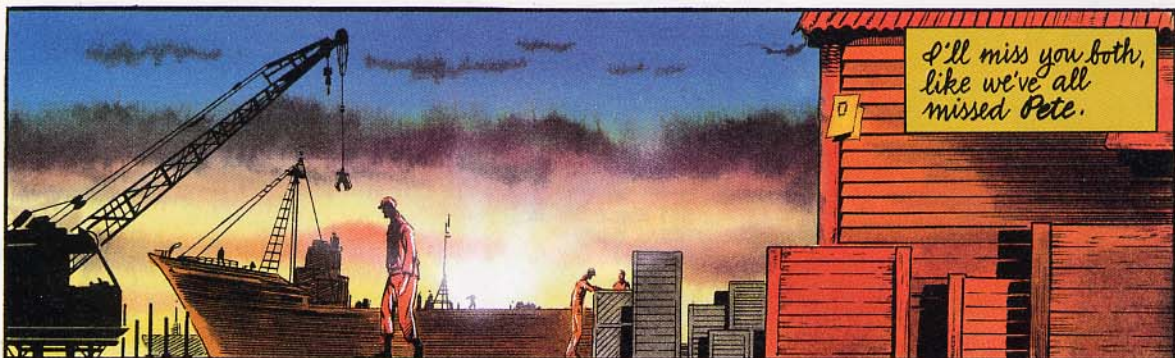
CHARLEMAGNE™#1. March 1994. Published by DEFIANT™, a division of Enlightened Entertainment Partners, L.P., 232 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016. Jim Shooter, President; Winston Fowlkes, Publisher. Published monthly. Copyright © 1994 EEP, L.P. All rights reserved. Price \$3.25 per copy in the U.S. and \$4.25 in Canada. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any person living or dead or any institution is intended, and any such similarity that may exist is purely coincidental. The trademarks DEFIANT, ENLIGHTENED ENTERTAINMENT, and CHARLEMAGNE and all of the character names and likenesses featured herein are the exclusive property of EEP, L.P. PRINTED IN CANADA.





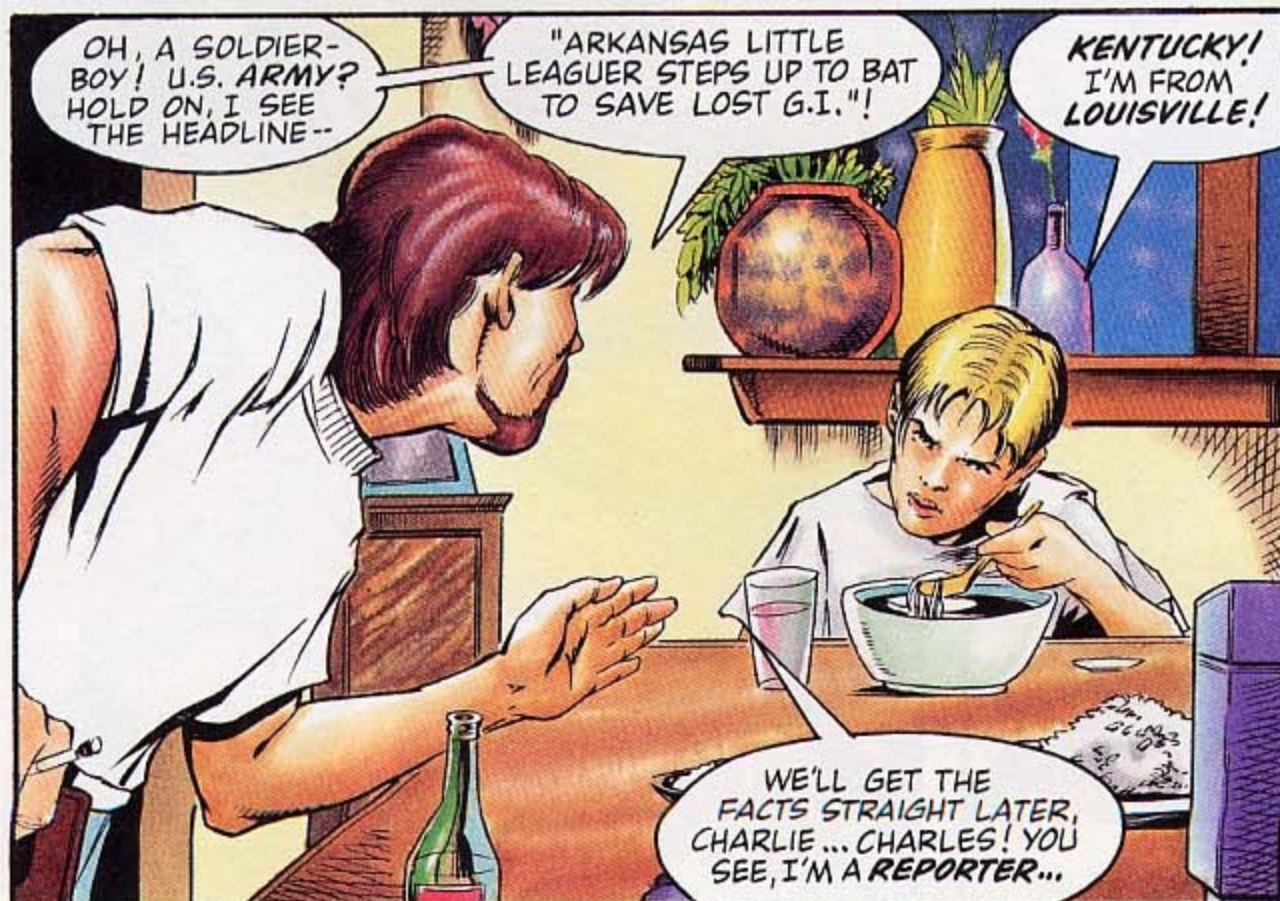
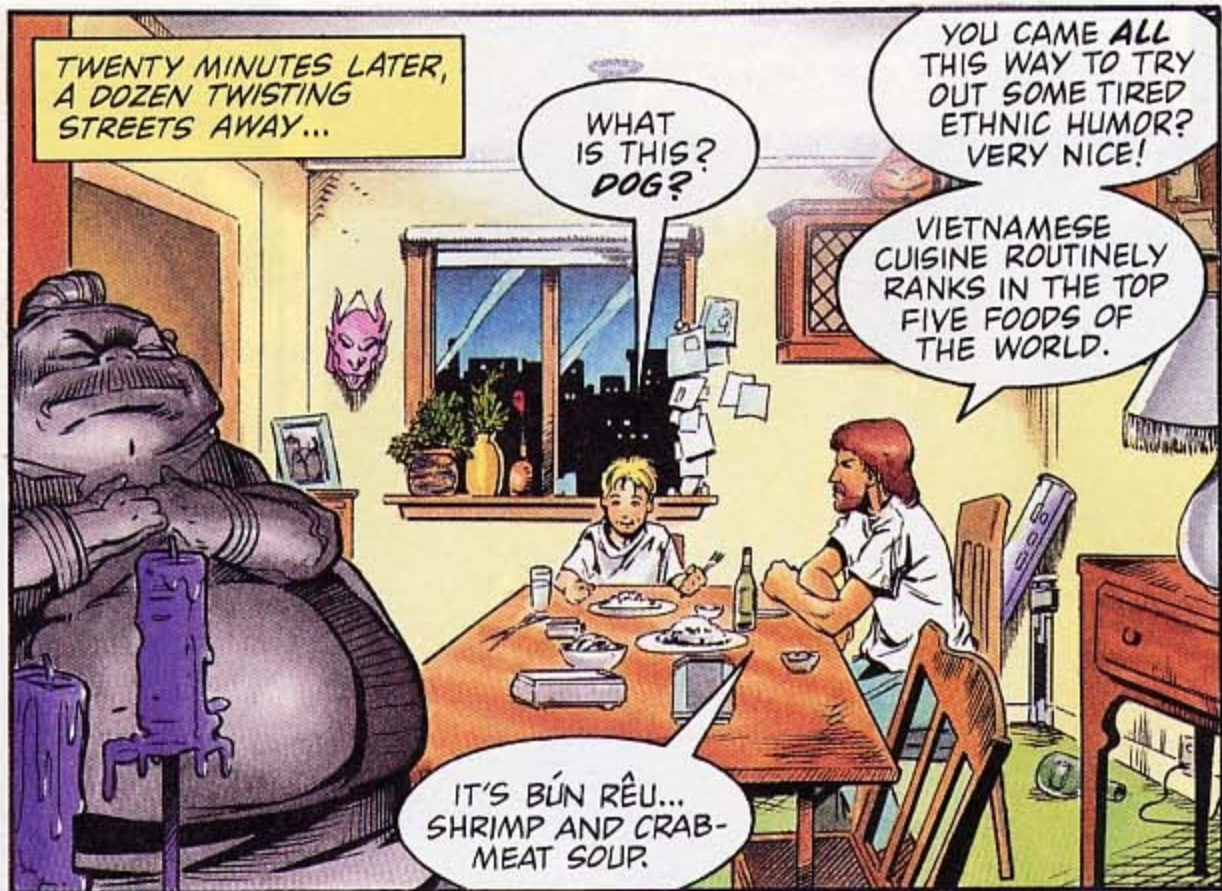


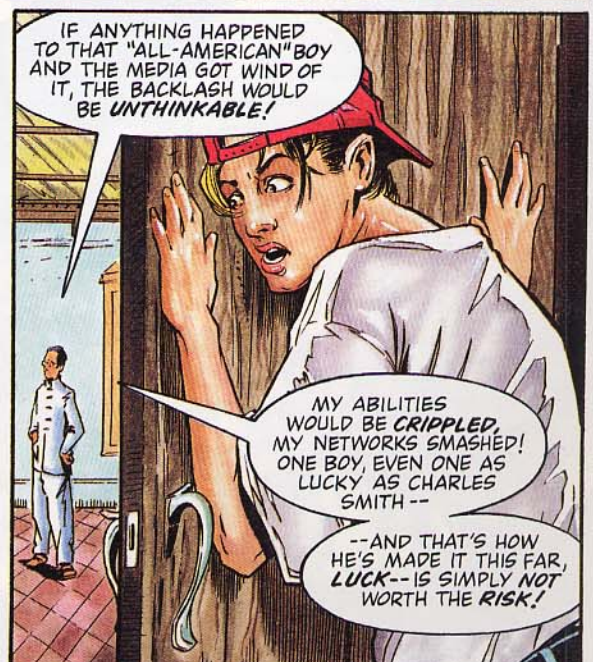
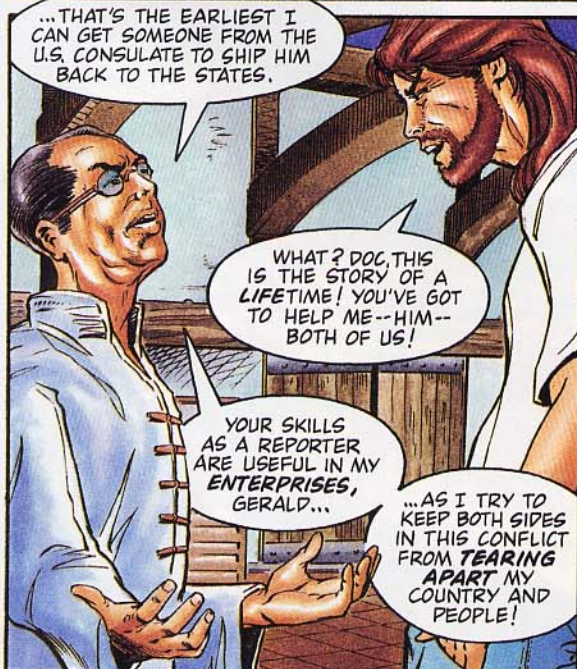
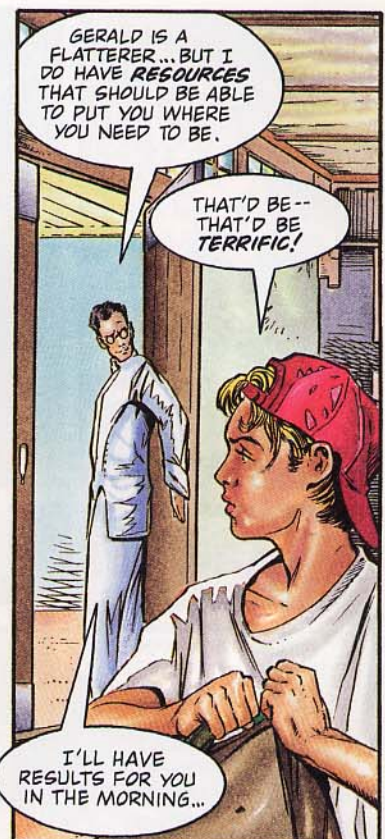
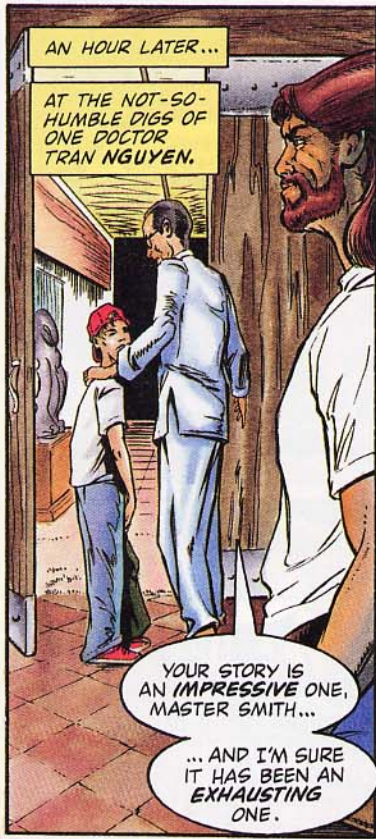


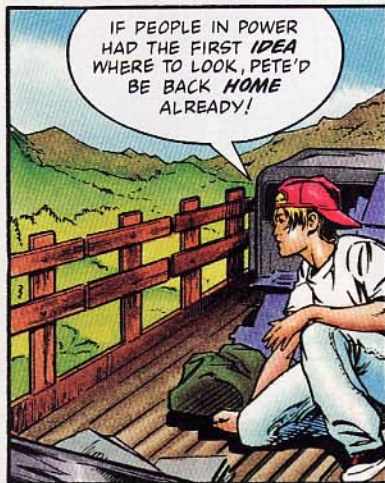


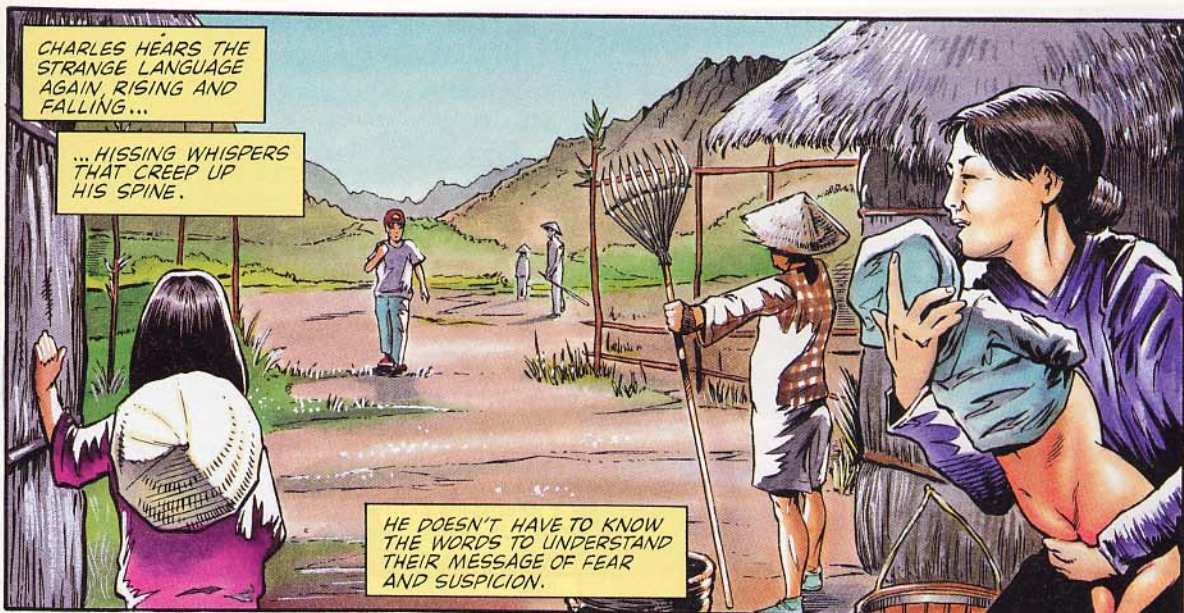












CHARLES HEARS THE STRANGE LANGUAGE AGAIN, RISING AND FALLING...

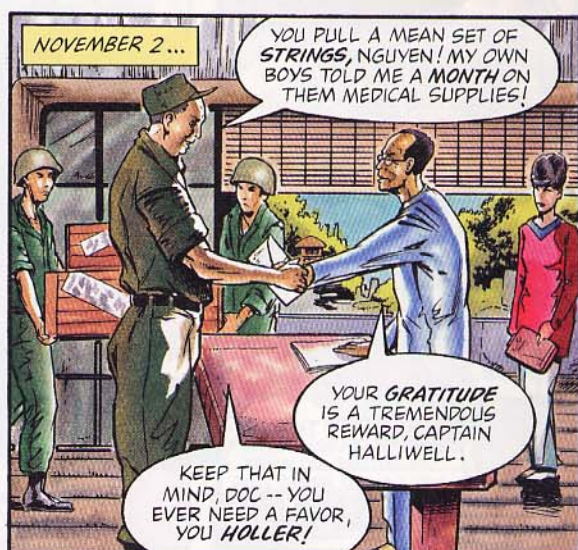
...HISSING WHISPERS THAT CREEP UP HIS SPINE.

HE DOESN'T HAVE TO KNOW THE WORDS TO UNDERSTAND THEIR MESSAGE OF FEAR AND SUSPICION.



PETER. PEE. TER. SMIII-THHH. PETER SMITH! THE PICTURE... LOOK AT THE--

LOOK AT ME. I SOUND LIKE THAT STUTTERING KID IN MRS. DERAGON'S CLASS....



NOVEMBER 2...

YOU PULL A MEAN SET OF STRINGS, NGUYEN! MY OWN BOYS TOLD ME A MONTH ON THEM MEDICAL SUPPLIES!

YOUR GRATITUDE IS A TREMENDOUS REWARD, CAPTAIN HALLIWELL.

KEEP THAT IN MIND, DOC -- YOU EVER NEED A FAVOR, YOU HOLLER!



OH, BUT CAPTAIN, SO MUCH MORE CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED WITH A WHISPER.

MR. KISSINGER CALLED TO THANK YOU FOR THE GIFT.

HOW NICE... PERHAPS I'LL HAVE OCCASION TO EXPLORE THE EXTENT OF THOSE THANKS SOMEDAY SOON.

ANYTHING ELSE, DOCTOR?

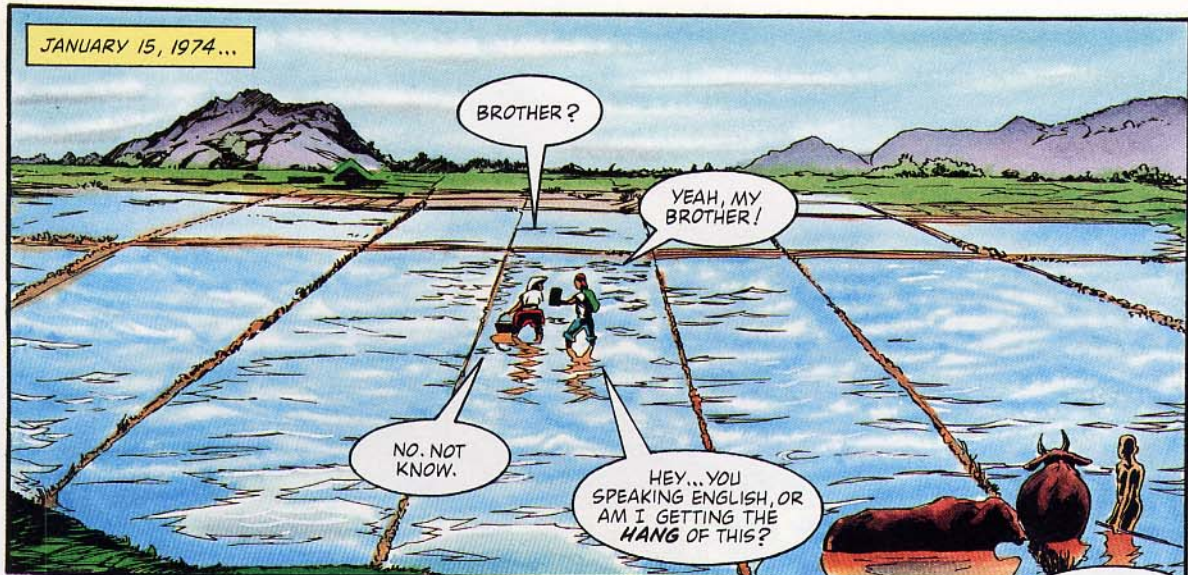
NOT AT THE MOMENT... WELL, ACTUALLY, THERE IS SOMETHING THAT'S BEEN ON MY MIND.



IT'S NOT A PRIORITY, TRUNG, BUT PUT A WORD TO OUR PEOPLE.

SEE WHAT THEY HAVE TO SAY ABOUT AN AMERICAN M.I.A. OR P.O.W. HIS NAME IS PETER SMITH....

JANUARY 15, 1974...



BROTHER?

YEAH, MY BROTHER!

NO. NOT KNOW.

HEY...YOU SPEAKING ENGLISH, OR AM I GETTING THE HANG OF THIS?

APRIL 3...



THE VIETCONG HAS NO TRUER FRIEND THAN DOC NGUYEN! THIS FOOD WILL ALLOW US TO CONTINUE OUR STRUGGLE!

IF I CAN EVER BE OF EQUAL SERVICE...

I'LL KEEP THAT IN MIND, DUONG. IN THE MEANTIME, DO WHAT YOU CAN TO BRING THIS AFFAIR TO A QUICK AND MERCIFUL END.

SOME INTERESTING NEWS, DOCTOR...



WHO IS IT THIS TIME, TRUNG? THE N.V.A.? THE AMERICANS? THE V.C.?

THE SMITHS!

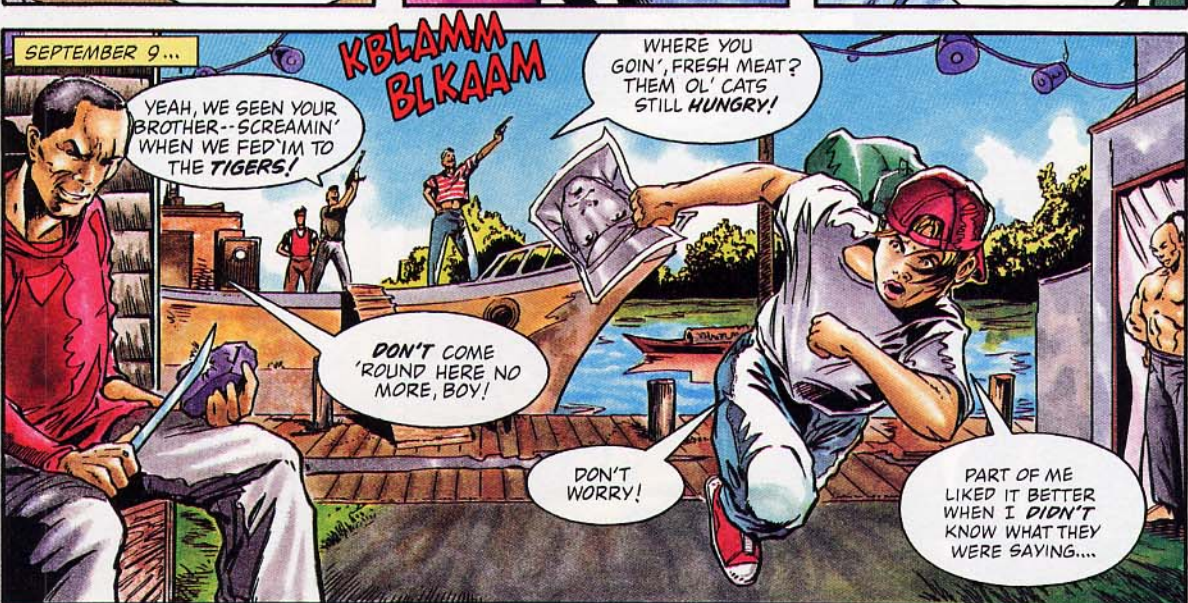


OUR PEOPLE REPORTED THE OLDER BROTHER ALIVE -- THEY'RE FINDING OUT WHERE! AND THE LITTLE ONE'S LUCK CONTINUES TO HOLD!

THE SMITHS... HUMMM. THANK YOU, TRUNG.

AND IT ISN'T LUCK...

SEPTEMBER 9...



YEAH, WE SEEN YOUR BROTHER--SCREAMIN' WHEN WE FED'IM TO THE TIGERS!

KBLAMM BLKAAM

WHERE YOU GOIN', FRESH MEAT? THEM OL' CATS STILL HUNGRY!

DON'T COME 'ROUND HERE NO MORE, BOY!

DON'T WORRY!

PART OF ME LIKED IT BETTER WHEN I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT THEY WERE SAYING....

OCTOBER 25...

YOU EVER GIVE ANY THOUGHT TO THAT KID, DOC?

"KID," GERALD? COULD YOU BE A LITTLE MORE VAGUE?

'BOUT A YEAR AGO. THE ONE LOOKING FOR HIS **BROTHER**. YOU SPOOKED HIM INTO RUNNING OFF WITH MY STORY.

HMM, YOUNG MASTER SMITH.

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY IF I TOLD YOU I'D BEEN KEEPING INCREASINGLY CLOSE **TABS** ON THE BOY...

... AND THAT HE HAS NOT ONLY SURVIVED, BUT MADE **PROGRESS** IN HIS UNDERTAKING?

I'D SAY **BLUFFING'S** MORE SUITED TO POKER THAN CHESS.

CHECK.

LOOKING BACK I MUST ADMIT TO **REGRETTING** MY TREATMENT OF THE CHILD.

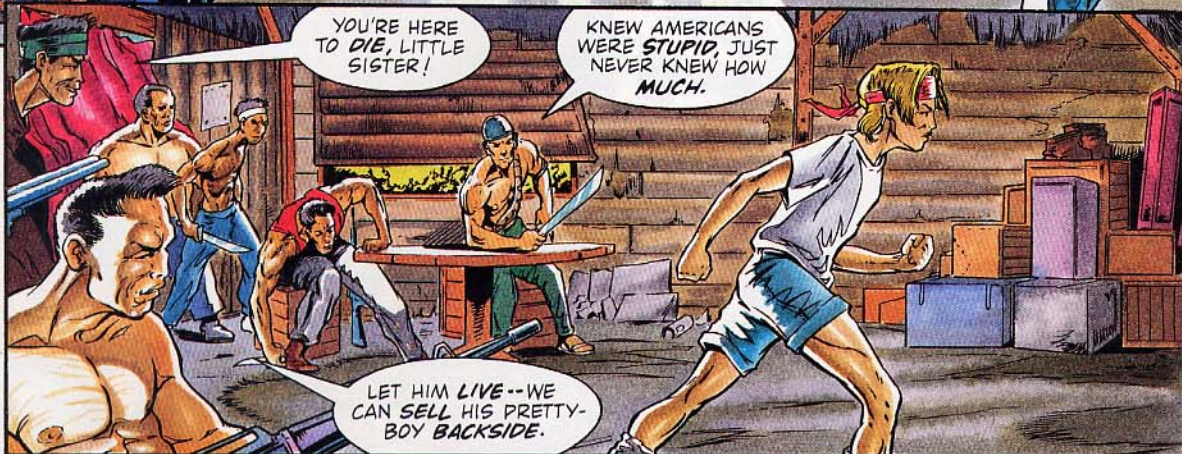
HIS VENTURE WAS **PURE**, AND DESERVED TO BE REWARDED IN TURN.

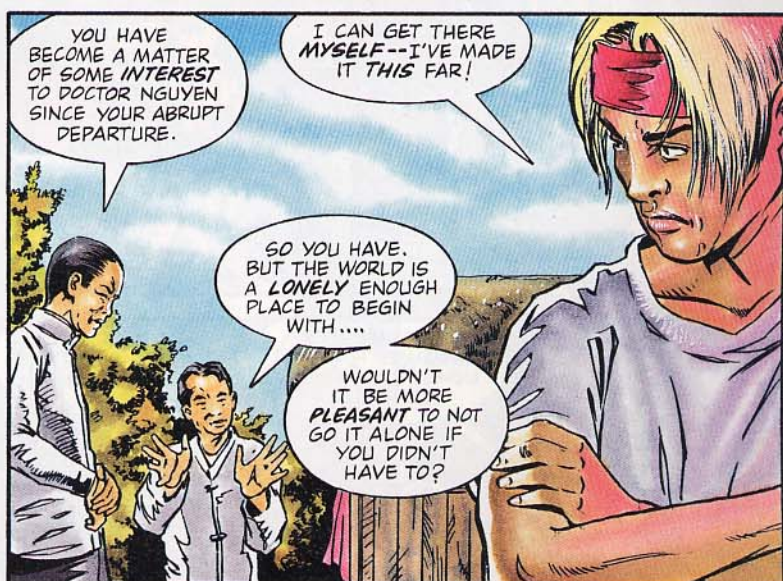
NOW YOU COME AROUND, AFTER MY **HEADLINE'S** LONG SINCE GOTTEN INTIMATE WITH A BOUNCING BETTY MINE!

DO NOT BE SO CERTAIN OF MR. SMITH'S FATE, GERALD.

OH. CHECKMATE.

MARCH 18, 1975...





SAIGON...

THANK YOU FOR COMING. IT IS TRULY A *DELIGHT* TO SEE YOU AGAIN.

I HOPE YOU'RE NOT GOING TO START WITH THAT "MASTER SMITH" STUFF AGAIN!

NOT AT ALL, "MASTER SMITH." I'VE DECIDED ON A NEW, MORE APPROPRIATE, NAME FOR YOU...

CHARLEMAGNE!

WHAT?

"CHARLES THE GREAT," FRANKISH MONARCH OF THE NINTH CENTURY. AND A WELL-DESERVED TITLE, GIVEN YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

ARE YOU MAKING FUN OF ME?

NO. I AM ATTEMPTING TO *MAKE UP* FOR MY ACTIONS SO MANY MONTHS AGO. THEY WERE SHORTSIGHTED...

...AND BLINDED TO THE MAN BEHIND THE BOY.

I'M HAVING A PARTY TONIGHT--DIPLOMATS AND POWER BROKERS I PLAY OFF ONE ANOTHER! WHY NOT COME?

I JUST WANT TO GET TO MY BROTHER.

THAT HAS BEEN ARRANGED FOR FIRST LIGHT. ENJOY TONIGHT'S FESTIVITIES!

CALL IT AN EARLY CELEBRATION FOR YOUR REUNION WITH YOUR BROTHER!

I'VE BEEN OUT THERE TOO LONG, DOC.

I DON'T CELEBRATE ANYTHING TILL IT'S IN MY HAND.

THAT EVENING ...

HER NAME IS LE XUAN.
LIKE SO MANY HERE, HER
LIFE HAS BEEN TOUCHED
BY DOC NGUYEN ...

BUT LE XUAN'S COMMON
GROUND WITH THE OTHER
PARTYGOERS ENDS THERE.
THEIR TALK AND POSTURING
IS THE STUFF OF ADULTS...
POLITICS, RELIGION...

... AND THE YOUNG LADY
NEEDS SOMETHING ELSE
TO CATCH HER INTEREST.

YOU'RE CHARLES,
AREN'T YOU? DOC'S
"CHARLEMAGNE"... HE'S
TOLD ME MUCH! I'M
LE XUAN.

"BEAUTIFUL
SPRING."

YOU KNOW
MY LANGUAGE
WELL!

HAD TO PICK
IT UP TO GET
THIS FAR.

YES... YOUR SEARCH
FOR YOUR BROTHER!
SO FOCUSED... SO
DEDICATED!

DON'T BE. I'VE
GRIEVED FOR THEIR
DEATHS....

I WISH I COULD
LOOK AT THINGS AS...
AS POSITIVE.

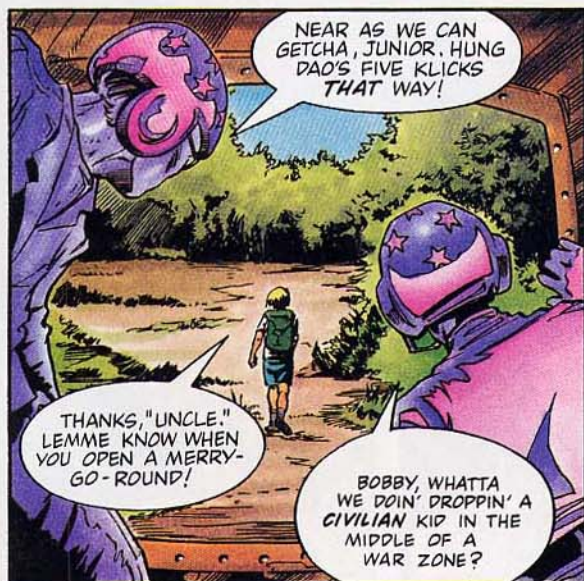
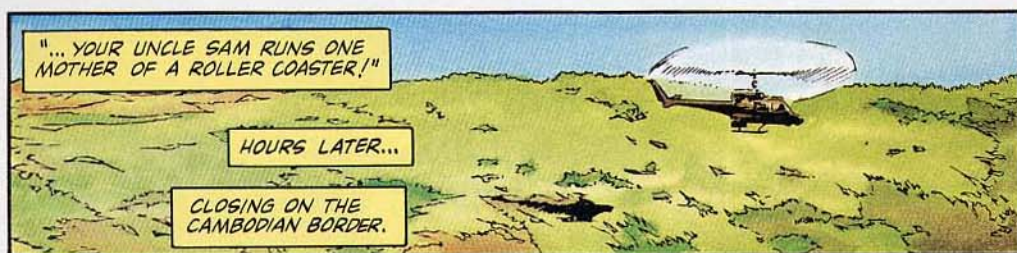
I WONDER IF I
WOULD HAVE HAD THAT
WILL ... IF ... YOU SEE, MY
THREE BROTHERS--

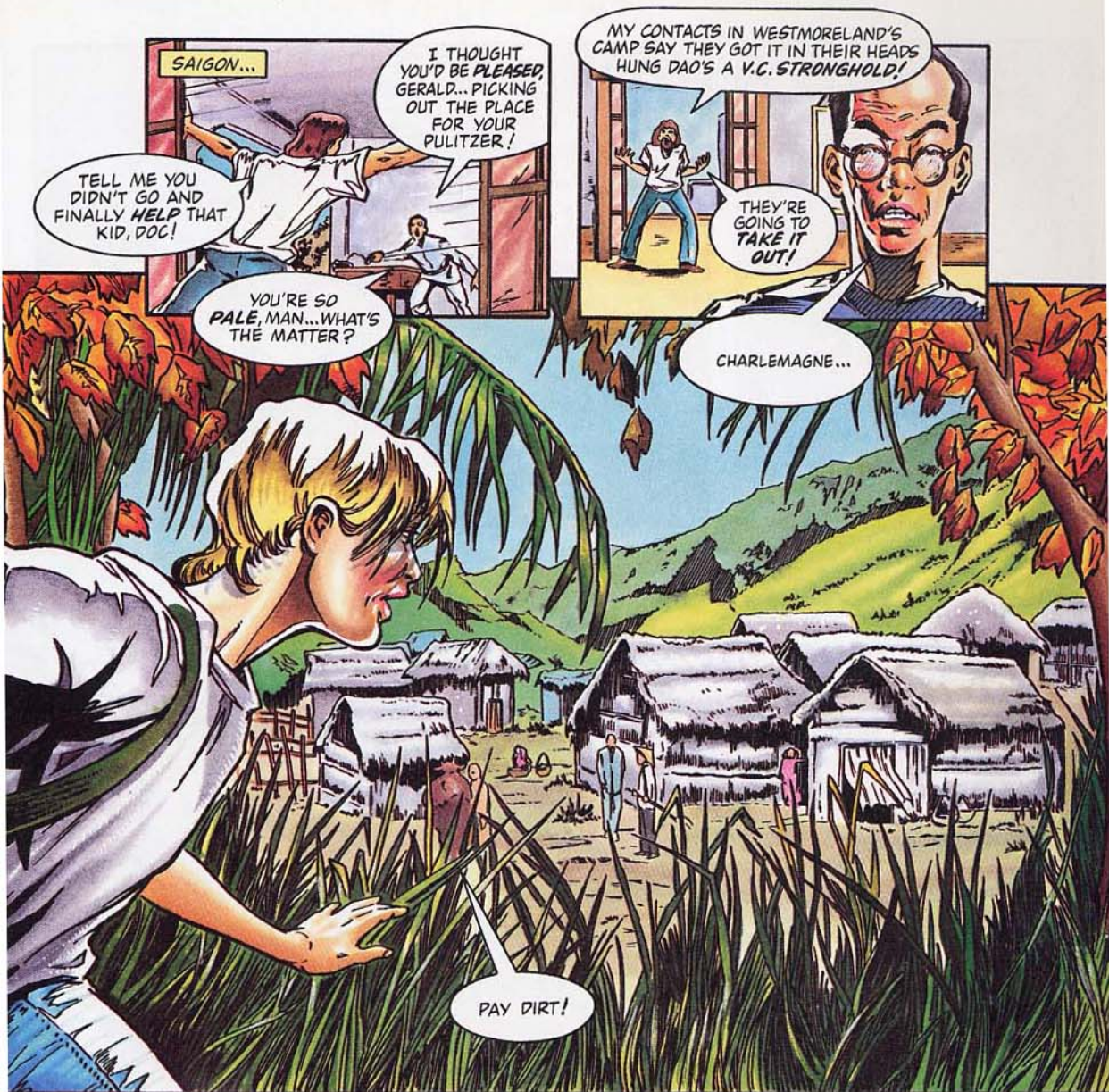
-- TAN AND NGO IN THE
ARVN, PHAN WHO JOINED THE
VC-- WERE **KILLED**. WE SAW
THE BODIES... WHAT WAS LEFT.
THERE WAS NO DOUBT.

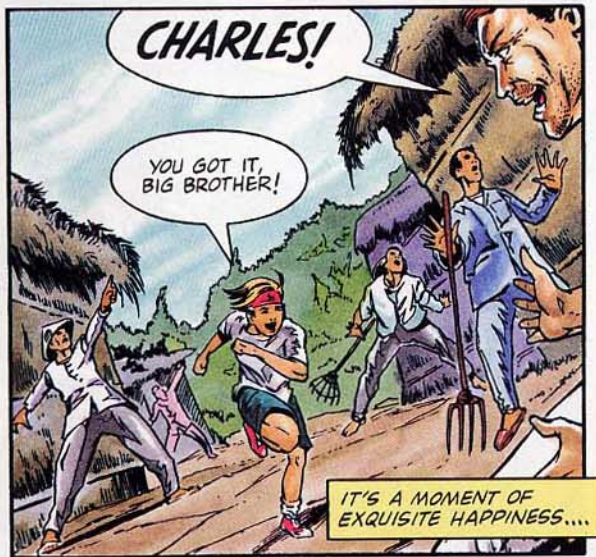
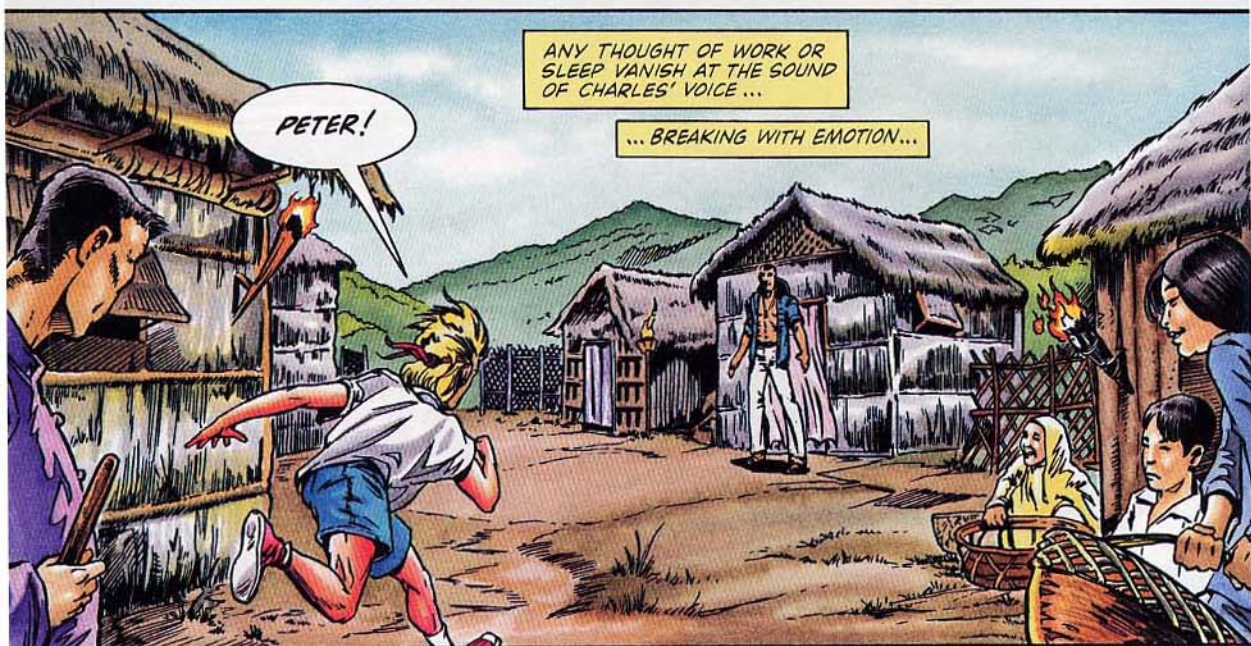
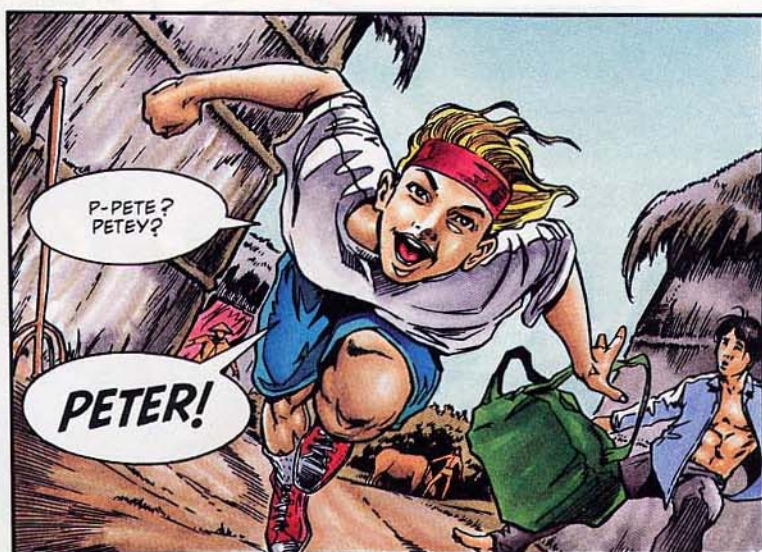
AND I'M
STANDING HERE
THINKING JUST ABOUT
MYSELF! I'M... I'M
SORRY FOR YOU.
FOR THEM.

NOW IT'S
TIME TO TURN
TO WHAT I CAN
BRING TO **LIFE**.

YOU **DO**. THAT
STRENGTH INSIDE...
THAT **SPIRIT** SENT YOU
AFTER YOUR PETER.







AND A MOMENT
IS ALL THEY'LL
EVER HAVE....

THE NATIVES
APPEAR RESTLESS,
GROUP LEADER.

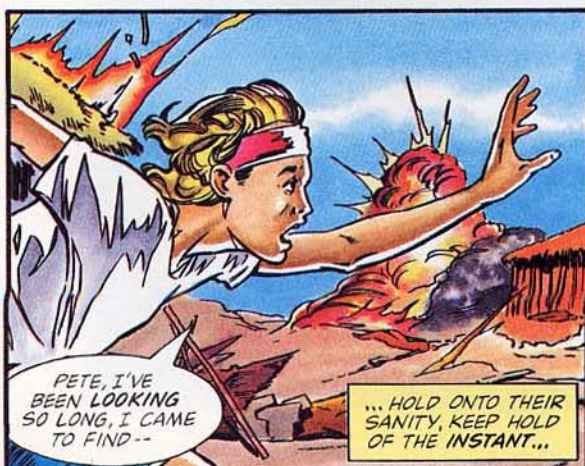
FWROOSH

BRAKA
BRAKA

THEN LET'S GIVE
'EM SOME O' THAT
ETERNAL REST!

UH, ROGER
THAT, GROUP
LEADER.

TRAKOOOM



... JUST WAITING TO
GO UP IN SMOKE.

THUNDER AND
LIGHTNING COME
DOWN FROM THE
HEAVENS...

...COURTESY A LETHAL
LITTLE PACKAGE MARKED
"MADE IN AMERICA."



NO...



HE'S RABBITING!

--I FOUND
YOU I KNEW
WHERE TO LOOK
I--



TH-TH-TH-THAT'S
ALL FOLKS!

BULLETS THE
SIZE OF RAIL-
ROAD SPIKES
TEAR INTO A
YOUNG BOY'S
BODY...



--F-FOUND YOU... PETE... WON'T
GIVE YOU UP... N-NOW--

... BUT STILL HE
GOES ON.



DRAWING HIMSELF
FORWARD.



REFUSING TO
GIVE UP.



UNABLE TO STOP
BELIEVING.



UNABLE TO ACCEPT THE
REALITY OF A COLD, HARSH
WORLD WHEREIN SOMETHING
LIKE THIS CAN HAPPEN...

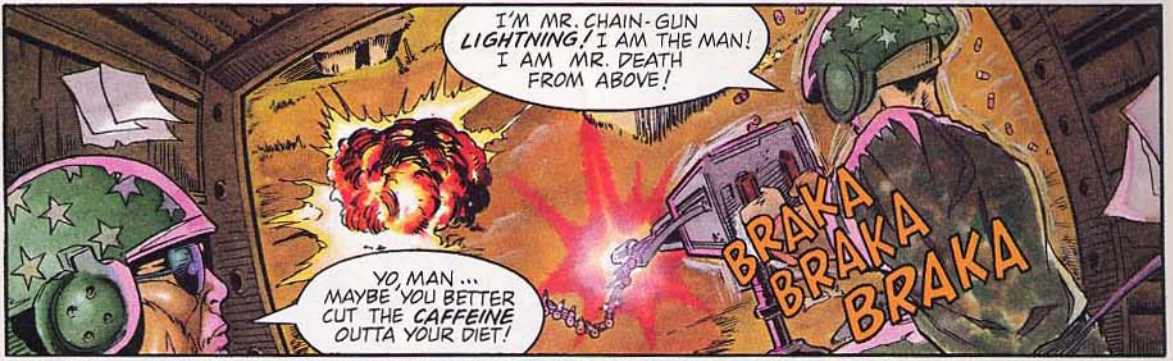
...AND WHERE THERE'S
NO ONE WHO CARES
ENOUGH --

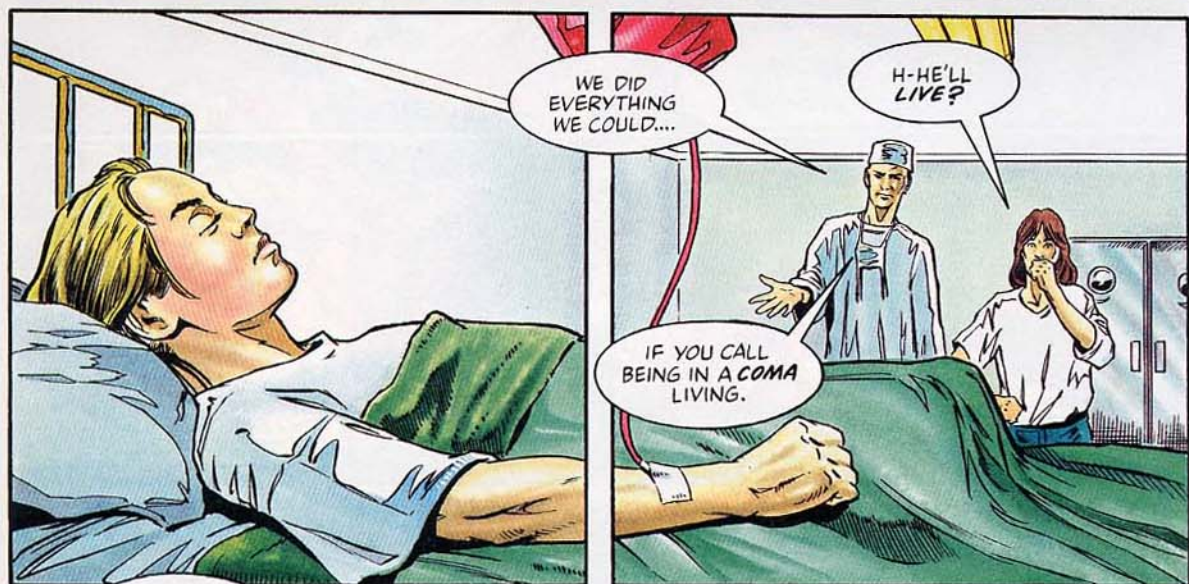
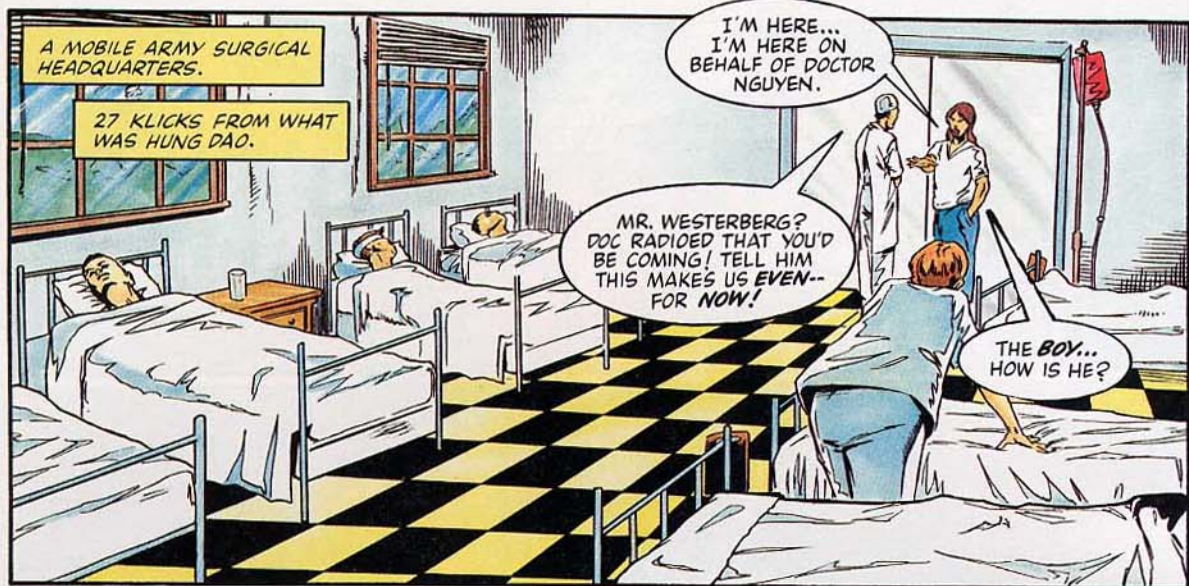
-- OR HAS POWER
ENOUGH --

-- TO MAKE
THINGS BETTER.



NEVER
AGAIN.





APRIL 29, 1975...

--EVACUATING THE
LAST AMERICAN FORCES
FROM SAIGON! WE GO
NOW LIVE TO--

HE'S
ALL YOURS,
DOC!

EASIEST MONEY I
EVER MADE! NOTHING
TO GET, JUST FORGET!
GONNA MISS DOING
BUSINESS WITH
YOU, NGUYEN.

I CAN'T
SAY THE SAME,
GENTLEMEN. PLEASE
LEAVE NOW, BEFORE
MY MORE RADICAL
COUNTRYMEN TEAR
YOU APART.

I'M CLEARIN' OUT,
TOO, DOC. THINGS WERE
TOLERABLE IN-COUNTRY,
WITH A SYSTEM I COULD
MAKE WORK...

...BUT NOW IT'S
A FREE-FOR-ALL,
AND THAT'S TOO SCARY
FOR MRS. WESTERBERG'S
LITTLE BOY. I COULD
TRY AND TAKE
THE KID....

WITH NO PAPERS IN HIS
NAME? NO EXPLANATIONS
FOR HIS BEING HERE? THE
SITUATION IS TOO DANGEROUS
FOR HIS CONDITION.

GO HOME TO
AMERICA, JERRY. WRITE
YOUR HEADLINES.

CHARLEMAGNE IS
MY RESPONSIBILITY
NOW....



INSIDE CHARLES' MIND,
DEEP WITHIN THE SOUL.

TRAPPED WITHIN A CRIPPLED
BODY, ALL THE BOY HAS
ARE HIS DREAMS.

IT'S TIME
TO LEAVE?



FEBRUARY 23, 1993...

I'M NOT TELLING YOU HOW TO DO YOUR JOB, KIM...



...BUT YOU'RE NEW HERE, AND CHARLEMAGNE'S CONDITION REQUIRES VERY SPECIAL TREATMENT!

I UNDERSTAND, DOCTOR NGUYEN! I'M EXERCISING HIS ARMS AND LEGS AS PART OF HIS PHYSICAL THERAPY AND--



LEGS?! YOUNG LADY, WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

WHAT IS IT? WHAT DID I SAY?



YOU SAID...

...LEGS.

IS THERE... IS THERE A PROBLEM?



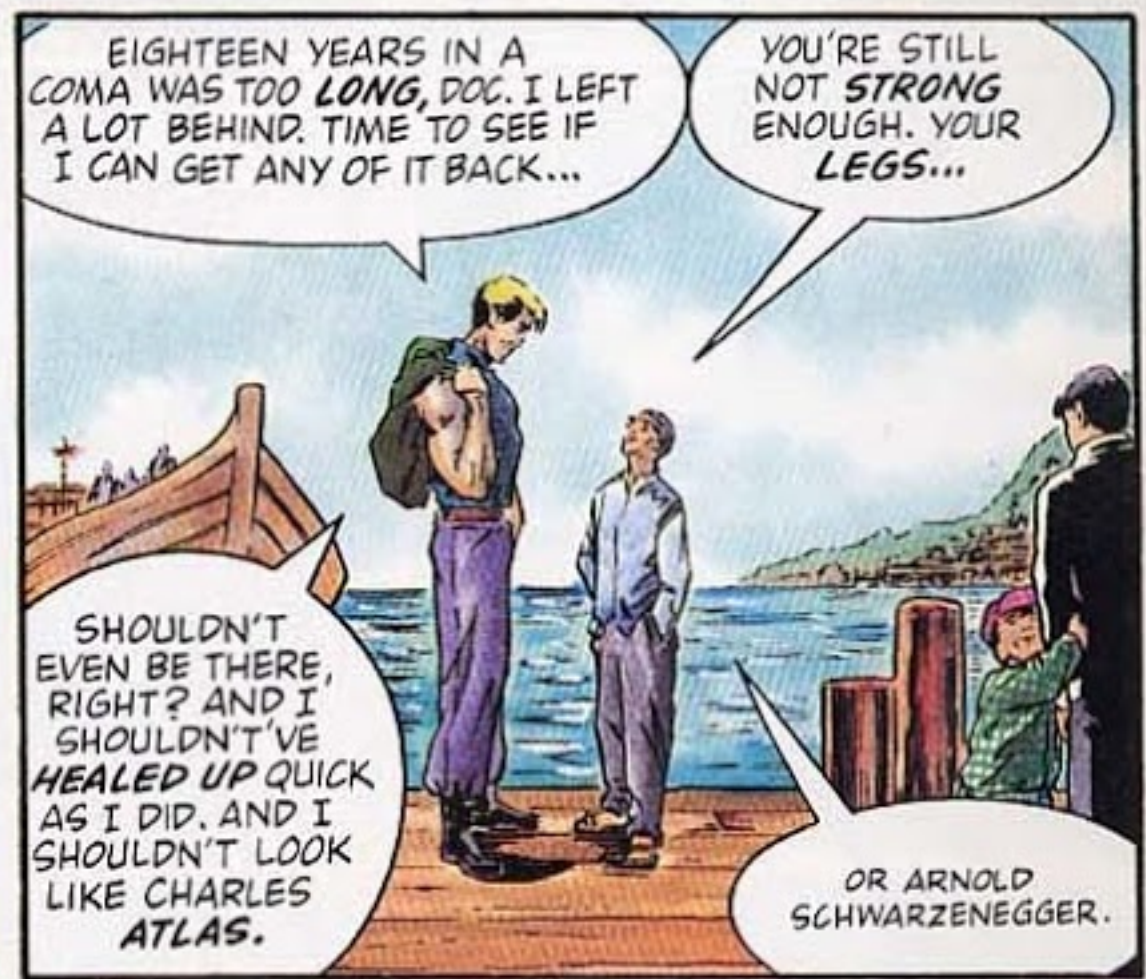
N-NO. NOT ANYMORE.

IT'S ... IT'S IMPOSSIBLE. IT'S...A MIRACLE. IT'S...



G-GOOD... TO SEE YOU ... DOC.







"...AND WITHIN YOUR SOUL..."

HOURS LATER, BELOW DECK.

YOU WANT SOME HELP WITH THAT?

THAT'S OKAY... I DON'T NEED IT. IT'S NOT LIKE I'M A GROWING BOY ANYMORE, I GUESS.

YOU JUST PICK UP ON THAT FACT?

LET'S JUST SAY, I'M STILL A KID AT HEART.



KRKLOOM

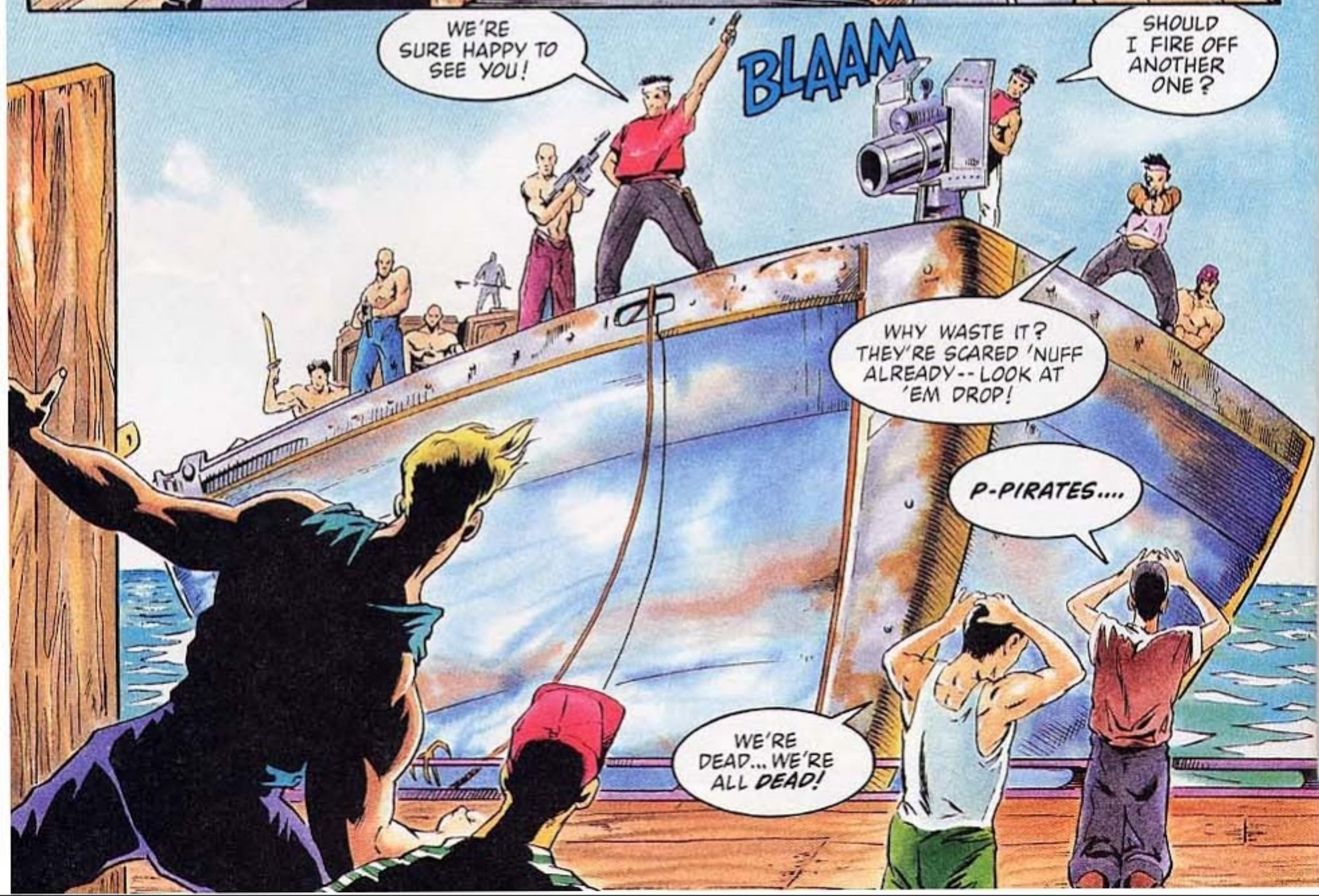
WH-- WHAT'S THAT?

WE'RE NOT GONNA FIND OUT DOWN HERE...



COME ON!

LOOKEE THEM COME *RUNNIN'*! MUST BE HAPPY TO SEE US, HUH?



WE'RE SURE HAPPY TO SEE YOU!

BLAAM

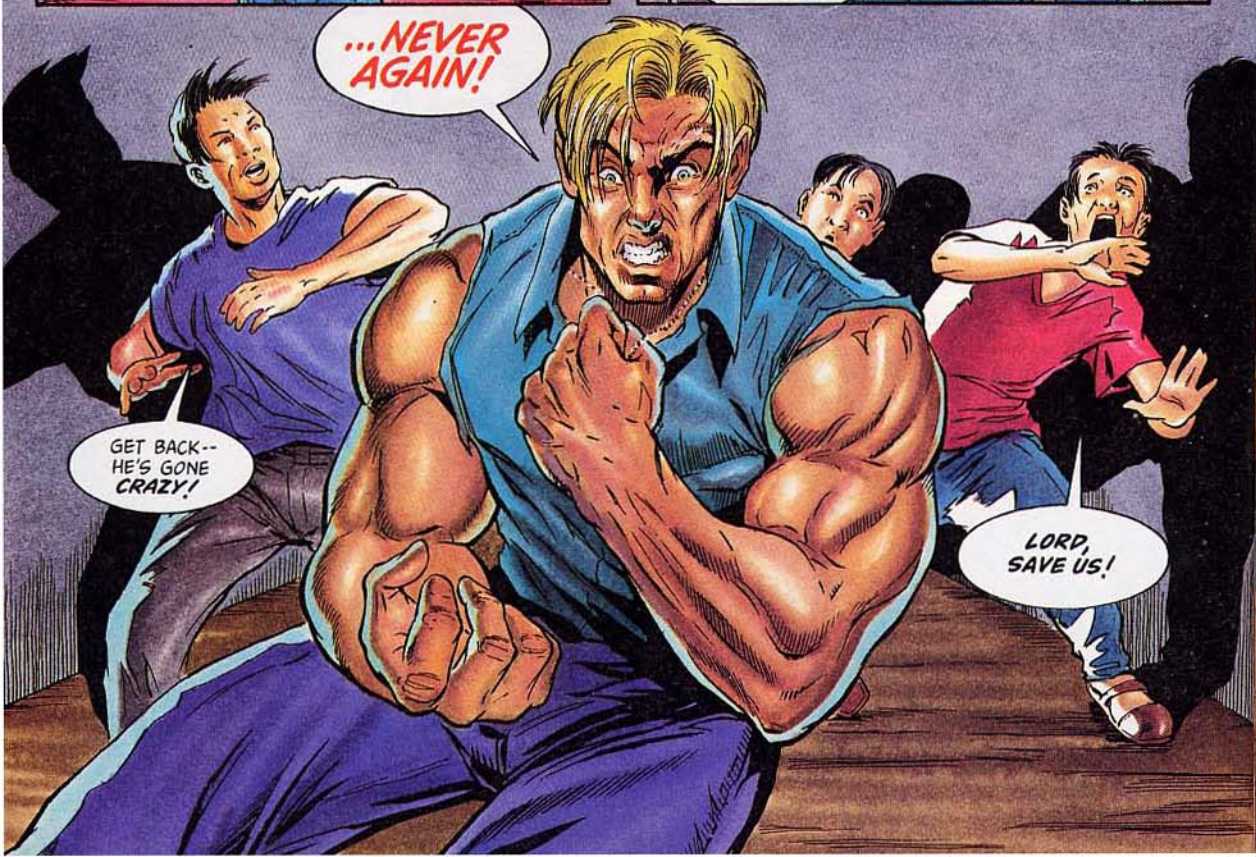
SHOULD I FIRE OFF ANOTHER ONE?

WHY WASTE IT? THEY'RE SCARED 'NUFF ALREADY-- LOOK AT 'EM DROP!

P-PIRATES....

WE'RE DEAD... WE'RE ALL DEAD!

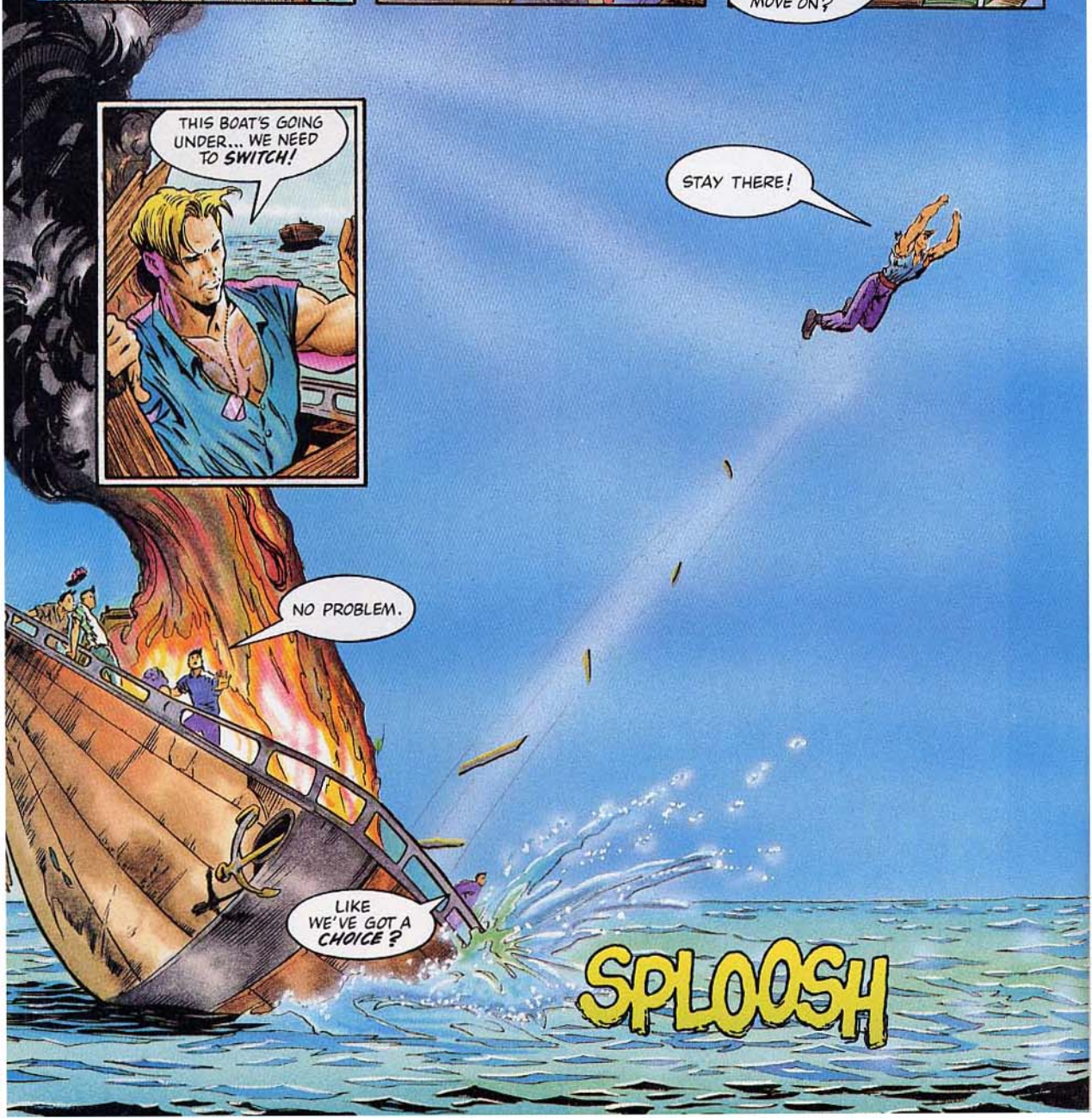




THUNDER AND
LIGHTNING, AGAIN.

BUT NOW THEY
EXPLODE ON THE SIDE
OF THE RIGHTEOUS.



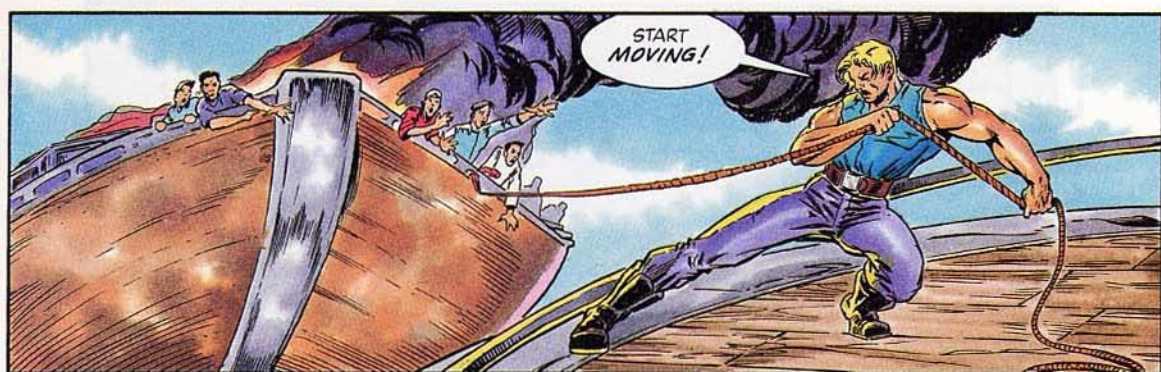


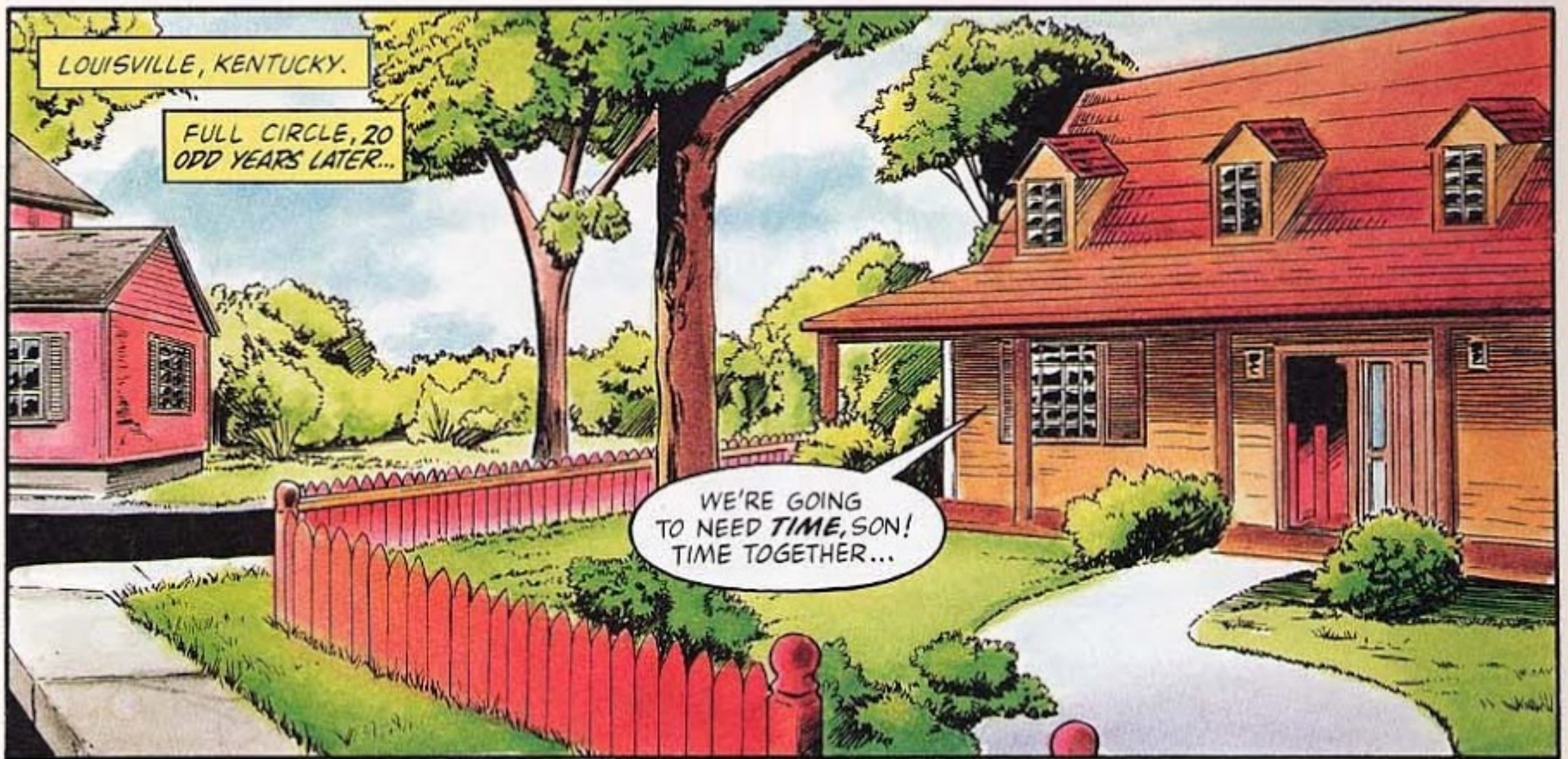
SPLOOSH







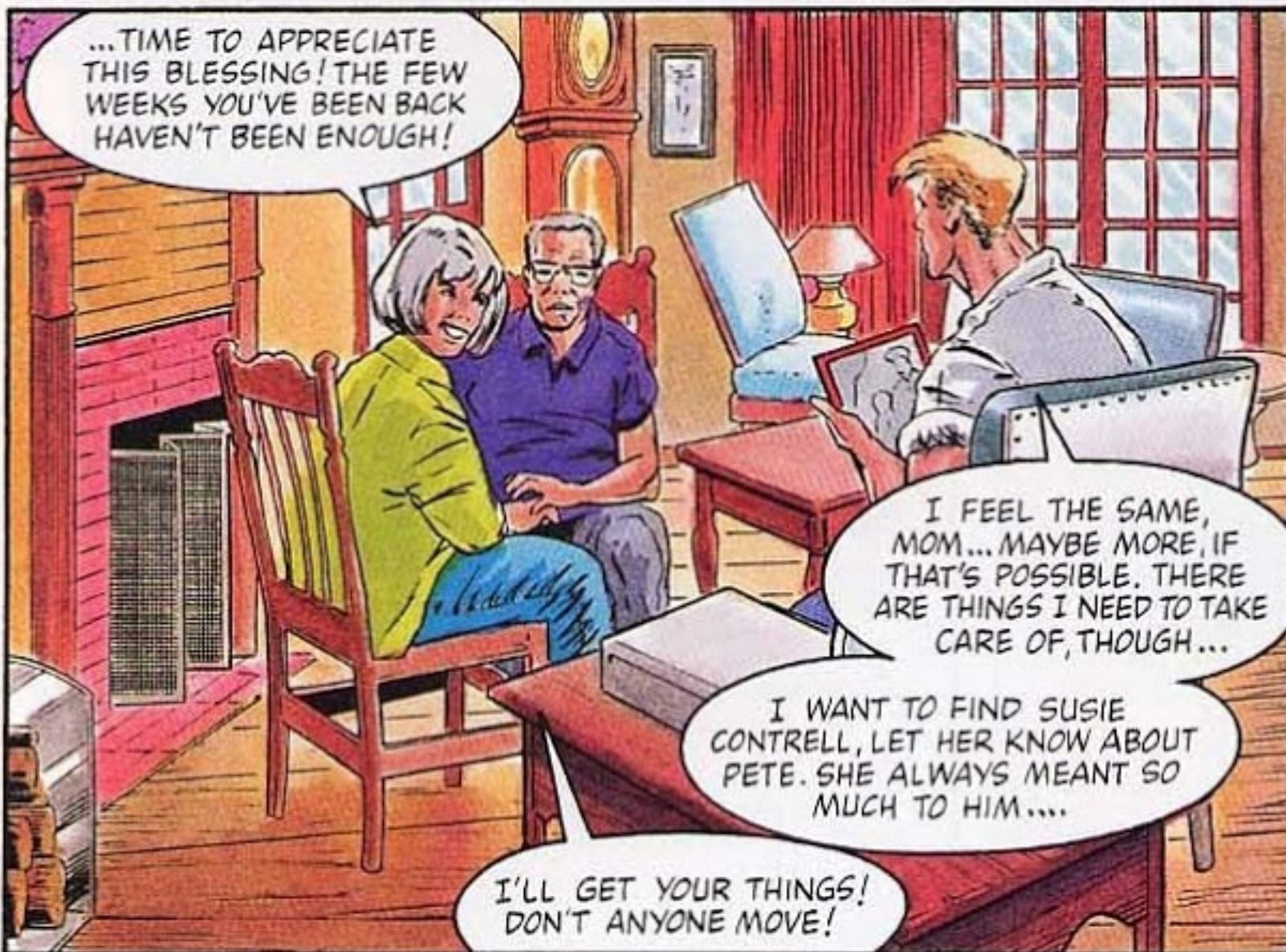




LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY.

FULL CIRCLE, 20
ODD YEARS LATER...

WE'RE GOING
TO NEED **TIME**, SON!
TIME TOGETHER...

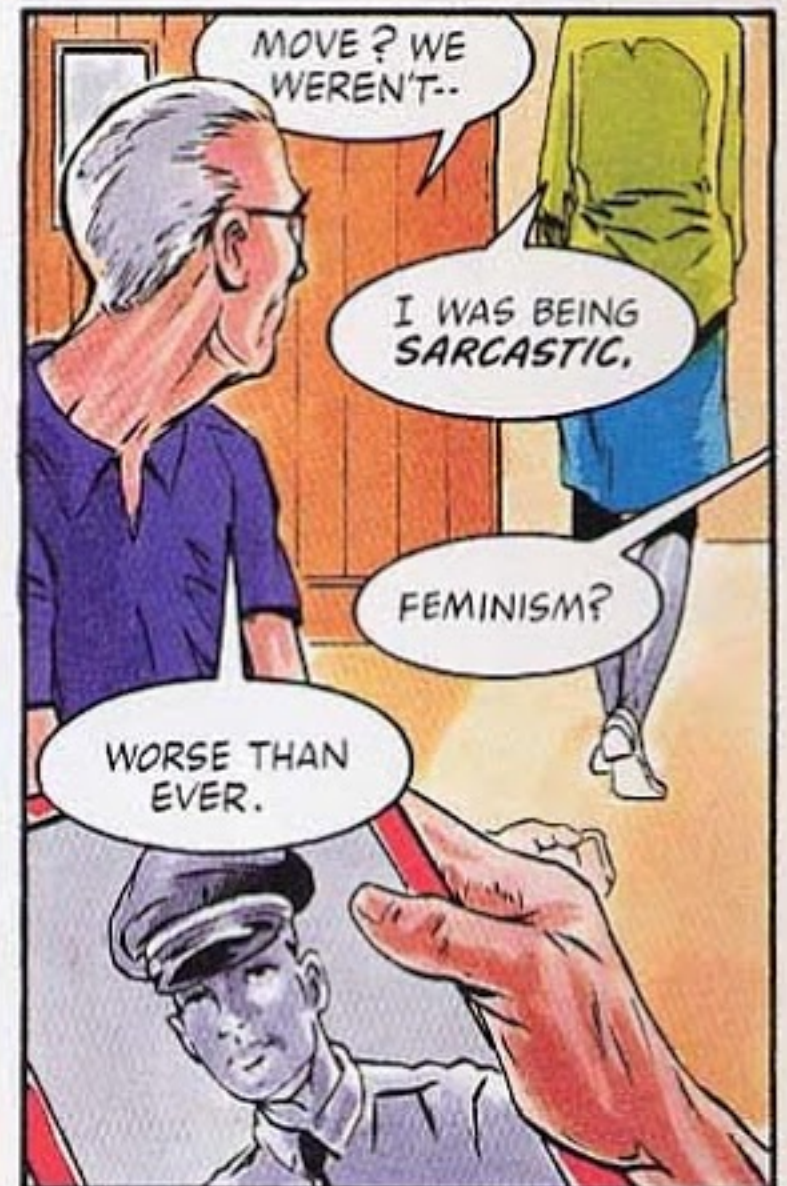


...TIME TO APPRECIATE
THIS BLESSING! THE FEW
WEEKS YOU'VE BEEN BACK
HAVEN'T BEEN ENOUGH!

I FEEL THE SAME,
MOM... MAYBE MORE, IF
THAT'S POSSIBLE. THERE
ARE THINGS I NEED TO TAKE
CARE OF, THOUGH...

I WANT TO FIND SUSIE
CONTRELL, LET HER KNOW ABOUT
PETE. SHE ALWAYS MEANT SO
MUCH TO HIM....

I'LL GET YOUR THINGS!
DON'T ANYONE MOVE!



MOVE? WE
WERENT--

I WAS BEING
SARCASTIC.

FEMINISM?

WORSE THAN
EVER.



CHARLES... AFTER THE
WAR, A BOOK CAME OUT.
SOME **REPORTER**-- WESTERBERG,
WESTERBUG... ANYWAY,
ONE CHAPTER ...

...IT WAS ABOUT A BOY.
AMERICAN. SEARCHING FOR
HIS MIA BROTHER. I'D SOME-
TIMES **HOPE** THAT BOY
MIGHT BE YOU....

BUT I NEVER SHARED IT
WITH YOUR MOM 'CAUSE...
THAT BOY LOST HIS **LEGS**. JUST
THE THOUGHT WOULD'VE TORN
HER UP EVEN MORE....

THAT BOY... WAS
HE FROM KENTUCKY
OR ARKANSAS?

ARKANSAS,
I GUESS.

FIGURES.

